

the visit by President Clinton is a high watermark in relation to all the visits that we've held. And coming to Robben Island is something more important, with that significant achievement of coming to South Africa. And we appreciate that very much.

Q. President Clinton, what are you feeling?

President Clinton. Well, my first thought was to thank God that the person who occupied this cell was able to live all those years in that way without having his heart turn to stone and without giving up on his dreams for South Africa.

The other thing that I would say is that I think this is a good object lesson in life for all young people. You know, 99.9999 percent of the people will never have a challenge in life like the one Mr. Mandela faced when he spent all these years in prison. But everyone has difficulties, everyone faces unfairness, and everyone faces cruelty. And the one thing that is beyond the control of anyone else is how you react to it, what happens to your own spirit, what happens to your own heart, what happens to your own outlook on life.

And he is the world's foremost living example of that, and every young child, I wish, could think about his or her life that way, and there would be a lot more happiness in the world and a lot more generosity, because then no one would feel compelled to react in a certain way because of what others said or others did. It's a very important thing about living.

NOTE: The exchange took place during a tour which began at 1:15 p.m., led by Ahmed M. Kathrada, Chair, Robben Island Council, and a former prisoner.

Statement on Senate Action on Supplemental Budget Legislation

March 27, 1998

I am pleased that the Senate has approved important legislation to provide funding for victims of natural disasters, for support of our forces in Bosnia and the Persian Gulf, and to deal with the risk to financial stability around the world.

It is particularly important that the Senate, by a vote of 86-14, provided the International Monetary Fund with resources it needs to help stabilize Asian economies. The crisis in Asia poses a threat to American jobs and exports, and we already have seen evidence that weaknesses in economies there are having an impact here. To ensure that the American economy continues on the path of steady growth, Congress must make sure that the IMF is strong enough to respond to any broadening of the current crisis. And because the IMF functions like an international credit union, paying our share won't cost American taxpayers a dime.

I am also pleased that the emergency funding in this bill will allow our military forces to continue their missions in Bosnia and the Persian Gulf without impairing the high readiness level of our forces worldwide.

At the same time, I remain concerned that the Senate bill does not address the matter of United Nations arrears. This continues to undercut our global leadership.

I hope that the House of Representatives will act to fund all these critical activities before it returns home for recess.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Venezuela-United States Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance and Documentation

March 27, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Venezuela on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, signed at Caracas on October 12, 1997. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of modern mutual legal assistance treaties being negotiated by the United States for the purpose of countering criminal activities more effectively. The Treaty should be an effective tool to assist in the prosecution of a wide variety